

## Motivational Assessment Scale (Durand & Crimmins, 1990)

<b>Name of individual:</b>	
<b>Scale completed by:</b>	
<b>Behavioural description</b> (e.g. slapping head) :	
<b>Setting description</b> (e.g. kitchen, classroom) :	
<b>Date Completed:</b>	

### Instructions for Completion

The Motivation Assessment Scale was designed by Mark Durand to help identify those situations in which an individual is likely to behave in certain ways. From this information, more informed decisions can be made concerning the selection of appropriate reinforcers and treatments.

When completing the Motivation Assessment Scale, select a behaviour that is of particular interest. It is important that you identify the behaviour very *specifically*. *Aggressive*, for example, is not as good a description as *hits his sister*. Once you have specified the behaviour to be rated, read each question carefully and circle the one number that best describes your observations of this behaviour.

### Motivational Assessment Scale

	Never	Almost Never	Seldom	Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Always
1. Would the behaviour occur continuously, over and over, if this person was left alone for long periods? (For example, several hours)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Does the behaviour occur following a request to perform a difficult task?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Does the behaviour seem to occur in response to your talking to other persons in the room?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Does the behaviour ever occur to get a toy, food, or activity that this person has been told that he or she can't have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Would the behaviour occur repeatedly, in the same way, for very long periods of time, if no one was around? (For example, rocking back and forth for over an hour)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Does the behaviour occur when any request is made of this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Does the behaviour occur whenever you stop attending to this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Does the behaviour occur when you take away a favourite toy, food, or activity?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Never	Almost Never	Seldom	Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Always
9. Does it appear to you that this person enjoys performing the behaviour? (It feels, tastes, looks, smells, and/or sounds pleasing)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Does this person seem to do the behaviour to upset or annoy you when you are trying to get him or her to do what you ask?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Does this person seem to do the behaviour to upset or annoy you when you are not paying attention to him or her? (e.g. if you are sitting in a separate room, interacting with another person).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Does the behaviour stop occurring shortly after you give this person the toy, food, or activity he or she has requested?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. When the behaviour is occurring, does this person seem calm and unaware of anything else going on around him or her?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Does the behaviour stop occurring shortly after (one to five minutes) you stop working or making demands of this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Does this person seem to do the behaviour to get you to spend time with him or her?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Does the behaviour seem to occur when this person has been told that he or she cannot do something he or she had wanted to do?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Instructions for Scoring

Place the score for each question in the appropriate box below (the score for question 1 in box 1 for example). Add up all the scores in each column and enter as the total score (for example, the sensory score would be the sum of question 1 + 5 + 9 + 13). The mean score is the total score divided by four. This should then indicate the relative ranking of the motivation.

	Sensory		Escape		Attention		Tangible	
1			2		3		4	
5			6		7		8	
9			10		11		12	
13			14		15		16	
Total Score								
Mean Score								
Relative Ranking								

## Results

This scale is not an exact science but can be used as an indicator of what may drive and motivate individuals who are presenting with challenging behaviour. Behaviour in individuals with autism can appear strange, confusing and sometimes difficult and frustrating. Identifying the possible motivations behind these patterns of behaviour can help us go a long way to acceptance and intervention.

If you would like any further help or advice with difficult or challenging behaviour in an individual with autism spectrum conditions please contact us.

## References

Durand, VM & Crimmins, DB (1988) *Identifying the variables maintaining self-injurious behaviour*. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. V(18), pp. 99-117.